

CLAIM OR CLAIMS

I/WE CLAIM:

- 09602367-062300
1. A method for operating a computer network to direct the transmission of a document by electronic transmission by a method of general document recognition, the general document recognition method comprising the steps of
    - (a) receiving a document from a user to be transmitted to a recipient;
    - (b) testing the document against a set of previously defined rules to assign to the document a document type from a set of previously identified document types;
    - (c) extracting data from the document, based on previously defined rules associated with that document type, the extracted data identifying the either the intended destination or the intended recipient of the document;
    - (d) if the extracted data identifies the intended destination of the document, then sending the document by facsimile transmission to that destination;
    - (e) if the extracted data identifies the intended recipient for the document, then:
      - (i) sending a query to a data base containing destination information associated with a pre-defined set of recipients, the query identifying the recipient and requesting as a response a destination associated with the intended recipient, and
      - (ii) upon receiving a response to the query, sending the document by electronic transmission to that destination.
  2. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the document type is identified by the name of the file containing the document.
  3. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the document type is recognized by a text string contained in the document.
  4. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the system organizes the document by pages based on rules associated with the document type.
  5. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein during the data extraction step, if instructed to do so by the rules associated with that document type, searching the document for a character string associated with destination information.
  6. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein during the data extraction step, if

instructed to do so by the rules associated with that document type, searching the document for a recipient identifier.

- 5           7. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the data base of recipients is an LDAP data base.
8. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the electronic transmission of the document is by facsimile transmission.
- 10          9. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the electronic transmission of the document is by e-mail transmission.

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